1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

512 grains of sand, they wait patiently and quietly, though hungry.
461 They seek no shelter from the wind, preferring it to the myriads of insects lurking in any sheltered spot. And then, too, it is cool in the wind, terrifically hot away from it.

512 About midafternoon the hunters and food gatherers straggle in.
224 They bring small crocodiles and turtles, crocodile eggs, turtle eggs,
222 perhaps some honey; and the women return with full baskets containing changuango, a wild root that they have dug up in the savanna. They, too, may bring turtle eggs. Not always, of course. The men and the women may return with empty hands and empty baskets. In any event there is no boisterous reception, but the same silence, the same quiet acceptance of the day and what it brings as they have shown at its beginning. Fires are built larger, the women roast the
512 roots, the men help with the turtles and the crocodiles. These are
252 placed whole on the fire until the shells are toasted and then they
515 are cracked open. Wives become busy delousing their husbands, using a carved stick to help in the search. Sometimes the lice are picked and eaten. But the bodies of the men are covered with numerous black blisters, showing that they have suffered the daily torment from the insects. The wife crushes all of these blisters with the same delousing tool.

512 Dinner is a gala time. Calabash dishes containing the various
264 courses are placed in the center of the ring formed by each family.
262 The food is picked up and carried to the mouth with the fingers. There are crocodile eggs. These are opened and the contents are sucked up raw. The same is done with the turtle eggs. There is the course of roasted changuango, and the pieces of turtle meat. But the real delicacy is crocodile, the best meat of all. The crocodile is eaten in its entirety, except for the entrails, and when the dinner is over some of it is left by the fire, an open invitation to anyone to fill any empty portion of his stomach. The stomachs become distended as tremendous quantities of food are swallowed. This is the only real meal of the day, and the fear of a dinnerless tomorrow drives the eaters to exceptional feats of gourmandizing until their bodies can hold no more. The lean dogs fight among themselves over the refuse heaps. The vultures glide overhead or are busy at crocodile entrails.

512 There is no after dinner work—no kitchen or table ware to wash,
517 nothing to spoil the proper enjoyment of a full stomach. They eat
776 until they have had enough, and then they move to the east of the fires to lie on the clean sands and watch the sun hide beneath the western horizon. For about half an hour they watch the ever-changing colorful western sky and when rays of light emanate from below the horizon to streak the heavens with blue and gold and white, they

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512 rejoice, for they know that Kuma, the goddess creator of all things,
517 is content with them and is sending them a greeting in token thereof.
776 On the wings of the wind comes the roar of the araguatos.

But life starts in the east and ends in the west. The day is done and the night comes on. The Yaruros turn to face the east to watch
821 the beginning of star travel and also the fiery appearance of the
776 moon and its transformation to a chaste white. The sands glisten and above flash "falling stars", but the Yaruros say that these are messengers of Kuma doing their errands.

512 Then the women roll cigars, light them, and pass them to their men.
296 Everyone smokes and there is great contentment. There is reluctance
462 to stand up, so if a woman has to fetch some object, say a firebrand,
[516] she will crawl on all fours, looking not unlike some large but indescribably graceful ape.

When several stars of the big dipper have appeared the women
512 rise in a body and walk into the darkness west of the camp. They
462 disappear from sight and hearing. What mysteries they perform they only know. The men are left alone and they talk about heaven. The children play merrily.

The women return and quietly take their places, ready to prepare more cigars. It is good to lie naked on the sand looking at the sky,
000 listening to nature's symphony. With the same persistent effortless rhythm of the pulse beat the world outside of the individual is felt. There is the merry laughter of the children and the soft, deep, contented gurgle of the women; the soft voice of the shaman painting religious pictures, explaining existence; the murmur of the wind as a background to the calls of night birds, and the blowing of toninos, the splash of frolicsome fishes, the intermittent howl of the monkeys, the bark of the wolf, the roar of the jaguar; and the warmth of a full stomach.

512 A figure may detach itself from the camp shadows and disappear
796 in the darkness of the west. Several young men may afterwards take the same path—to join the shaman in his preparations for communion with the gods. They leave behind them a feeling of expectation but nothing is said. Someone has put up a bare pole where the sand is hard packed.

796 The shaman returns and goes to sit in front of the pole facing the
791 east. He sits quietly and alone in deep reverie. Later he may ask for a cigar. His wife will supply him with one.

After a period of contemplation he may begin to sing and dance. His people will join him. The music will become more and more animated, the singing and dancing will be done with increasing abandon. The stars and the moon will go their ways to rest in the west.
512 It is only when the sun peeps over the eastern horizon that they will

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where they believe their gods live. It was only when the sun began to burn our bodies that they approached me to chat. They expressed their concern over my illness and soon busied themselves to make me as comfortable as possible. While I distributed among them a few presents bought for them in Urbana, and turned all of the food over to Landaeta, the younger men were busy building a sun shelter, an arbor of the sweet-smelling guava bush, though for themselves they had only branches thrust into the sands, giving only a thin shade. From now on, I was completely in their care, and they were careful nurses and tender friends. The best of the hunt was mine, and even the women delighted in taking care of my clothing, and in bringing me delicacies.

They were glad to see me, and the women shamans soon began their chants while the men surrounded me and told me in their own language and in broken Spanish what had occurred the previous night.

[562]

Men are prohibited from singing during the day, but the women sit in swinging hammocks and chant their songs. I learned, too, that Landaeta's daughter had not died, for there she was, grateful and shyly looking at me, completely well. They attributed her cure to me, though I was not at all responsible for it. During the night, they told me, the gods had come among us, and told them that I, too, was one of Kuma's children, and again they insisted that I was related to them.

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I learned that Puaná and Itciai are cocreators with Kuma, the mother goddess, and they are directly responsible for the actual creation of the world. Hatchawa, in the form of a litttle boy, is another god who has given mankind fire, the bow and arrow, and many other blessings. Now, when the shaman sings at night his soul leaves his body and travels to the land of Kuma, leaving his body behind. The gods may come then, enter his body in the form of songs, and transmit their messages to the Yaruros. They had come the night before to greet me and to reassure my friends of my goodness and my own powers of shamanism.

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We sat, smoked, and talked all day. In the afternoon we feasted on crocodile, turtle eggs, wild roots, palm nuts, and honey. Finishing our dinner, we sat quietly facing the west, watching the skies. As the sun set low again, rays of gold, blue, and white shot into the sky from the horizon, and my friends rejoiced at this certain greeting of Kuma to us.

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Darkness came upon us, and in anticipation of a long night of singing and dancing—I could sing but could not dance, since I could not stand up—I lay on the sands to rest before the beginning of the ceremonies. but the skies interested the Yaruros and they came to tell me what they read there. The brightness of the stars and the changing

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the first fact that holds our attention is that Yaruros are strongly ethically conscious. Every shamanistic performance is the means for the propagation of ethical teachings. The shaman, or as the Yaruros believe, the gods and their dead ancestors speaking through the shaman, admonish various individuals and lay down the law for proper conduct. They hold the threat also that misconduct will be displeasing to the mother goddess and as a result life with her will not be as pleasant as it would be if they followed her precepts in this world.

According to the Yaruro philosophy the world is, by its nature, good and it was created by Kuma as a good thing. If any evil exists it has been introduced by man, who have forgotten or come to disregard the laws laid down by the goddess. The world, if unsullied by men, is a perfect integration of the elements which function for the good of mankind. Unfortunately, at times men will disturb the structure. There is implied in this the existence of free will for mankind, since it can change or disturb what was created by Kuma. And if we have recourse to the legends, we find that perhaps the lower animals have free will also, although it is exercised by them much more rarely than by mankind.

Kuma appears also as the teacher of ethical laws. She told the people, told Hatchawa, and now tells the shamans: to live in peace with each other; to respect each other; to help each other; to live good lives; to take care of the parents-in-law and the children-in law. When the wife is ill or otherwise the mother-in-law should look after the needs of her son-in-law, although they do not speak to each other. The Yaruros will find recompense for such moral living after death. They are poor on this earth but will be rich like Kuma in the other world.

During my stay the women remained bashful, never speaking directly to me, and when I approached generally looking away. In the latter days they would laugh merrily as they fled. Their culture does not permit free social intercourse with men, but any request on my part relayed to them through their husbands or brothers was eagerly complied with, and with better than good humor.

All were helpful toward each other and there did not appear to be any dissension. Extreme care was taken that a person's rights and prerogatives were not infringed upon. The husband never seemed to request anything of his wife that did not lie in her province, and when strange demands were made to please me, entire freedom was given to the wife, or daughter, to do as it pleased her. Any misfortune, however slight or serious, that would produce some expression of anger among white people was met by the Yaruros with merry laughter. At night each family group lay on the sands

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

781 Of great importance is the fact that the Yaruros live in a world which they understand perfectly. At night they watch the heavens for signs from their gods. Each night they read a new chapter in a great story book. During the day the winds, the skies, the sun, have much to tell them, and they watch and listen eagerly. Their world is not one of fear but one which, as created by Kuma, is excessively friendly and hopeful. Terror has been introduced by the white man.

771 For every species of plant and animal life a gigantic counterpart exists in the Land of Kuma. Originally the plants and animals, which have been domesticated by the white man, were given to the Yaruros, but the size of the horse and cattle frightened the Yaruros so much that they refused to mount one or tame the other. The white man seized the opportunity which has since made him master of the Yaruro country. However, they have no explanation for the superiority of the white race except sheer wickedness. This superiority is so startling sometimes that the Yaruros feel that the white man in some way must be closely affiliated with gods, good or bad. The appearance of the white man on the plains of Apure is a legendary event. A white man, the Yaruros say, appeared on a huge horse. He was covered with foul sores and destroyed everything in his path. The Yaruros are content to hunt and cultivate the soil. The result is that the civilized peoples raise crops, store them, but the Yaruros are condemned to wander about hunting for a daily dinner.

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825 Many of the animal species, natural formations and constellations are to the Yaruros metamorphosed races of man. One explanation for the monkeys, especially the araguatos (the howlers), is that they are the descendants of a group of people who, to save themselves, climbed to the top of a tree during the time of the flood. The caymans represent another race of men who failed to take advantage of Hatchawa's rope to be lifted out of the hole in the ground. The toninos also are a race of metamorphosed humans.

182 773 The Yaruro, according to their conception of mankind, were Kuma's chosen people. They were created first of all the Indian tribes and that is why they were given the open plains to live in with an open sky overhead so that they might be in close touch with Kuma day and night. The Guahibos, on the other hand, or as the Yaruros called them, the Tciricoi, the forest people, were created last and occupy an inferior position.

776 774 In addition to playing a purely religious role, the gods function as ethical teachers in every shamanistic performance, a function which is shared by the spirits who are close relatives of the living Yaruros. It is they who visit their living descendants and speak through the body of the shaman, correct abuses, scold the evildoers, and praise the good.

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

773 "Here, a son-in-law will take care of me now!" Then the Yaruros
539 lived. The shaman had a nephew and a son. The nephew fell in love with his own sister and married—he was changed into a jaguar and she into a snake (?). If it had not been for this there would not have been any snakes and jaguars. Human beings should not marry their own sisters. It was ordered by Kuma. Animals are different.

Then one man found a tree with all the fruits on it. He did not tell the others. A white man appeared on horseback. Said he would come back in eight days. He came back in a boat. Scattered seeds everywhere. Thus he changed the country. Before it was all open savanna, but now forests and agricultural products grew.

India Rosa taught the women. God taught the men. God wanted to give the horse to the Yaruros, but they were afraid to mount, so he gave it to the Racionales instead.

KUMA

791 Presumably, Kuma is anthropomorphic. The only ones among
● 776 the Yaruros who have any knowledge of this mythical being who is responsible for the world are the shamans. These individuals are
787 loath to discuss what they see in their dreams, claiming that all they have to say about such things are said during their shamanistic performances. Besides, they claim that they do not remember what they see during their trances.

531 Nevertheless, on the rattles appear graphic representations of what
776 Kuma is supposed to look like. In all cases, she seems to resemble a human being, standing with her arms extended upward in greeting
534 to her people. Such figures are represented on the gourd rattles shown in plate 24 and figures 25, 26, 27. It was explained that the lines
[30] appearing on the body of Kuma represent body painting and ornaments.

776 Of all the godheads or spirit forces of the Yaruros, Kuma is the most clear-cut. She is the creator of all things, and everything emanates from her. Her associates, Puaná, Itciai, and Hatchawa, function according to the laws of Kuma. Apparently they are not able to do anything without her consent, but occasionally she may be tricked. For instance, when Hatchawa decided to give fire to the people he threw a live fish into Kuma's fire. The wriggling of the fish scattered the coals, which the people seized and carried away.

Kuma is represented neither as an indulgent mother nor as an entirely benevolent creature in the myths. It is Hatchawa and Puaná who favor human beings. In fact, Kuma was opposed to peopling the earth with the human race. In spite of this there is no

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1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 S519 Yáñez S519

PLATE 25.—Decorated gourd rattles of the shamans. a, b, c, d. Views of Landaeta's *fyrerlu* instrument (rotating toward the left). e, f, g, h. Gourd rattle decorated by Landaeta after a night's shamanistic performance.

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FIGURE 26.—Shaman's gourd rattles. *a*, *b*, *c*, Views of same instrument. *a*, The long figure on the left represents Puaná. The next figure on the right is Hatchawa, next to which is standing Kuma. *b*, The three figures at the top are, reading left to right, Hatchawa, Kuma, and Iticiai. At the extreme right can be seen Puaná. In the lower portion the figures represent the Yaruros, except the figure of the bird, symbolism of which remained undisclosed. *d*, *e*, *f*, Views of same rattle. The figures represent the Yaruros dancing around a pole. The small figure in *e* represents a child.

FIGURE 27.—Shaman's gourd rattles. *a*, *b*, *c*, Views of same instrument. *d*, *e*, *f*, *g*, Views of same instrument. *a* shows Kuma in the characteristic posture of greeting her people. *b* and *c* show Kuma dancing with her people. *d*, *e*, *f*, and *g* are views of the same rattle that show Kuma's people, the dead Yaruros, dancing in her land.

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

criticism of Kuma, and there is even an implication that she always acts with the greatest wisdom.

THE LAND OF KUMA

Kuma lives in the west, apparently beyond the horizon. In the month of March and in early April, about 9 o'clock in the evening, there is a glow in the western sky, a beautiful phenomenon, which the Yaruros explained is the reflection from Kuma's land. Its exact geographic position does not seem to be known and is as hazy as a Catholic's idea of the position of Heaven. For instance, we are told that the stars are both the lights from Kuma Land and the people from that land walking about at night, and yet the Land of Kuma is localized somewhere in the west.

This land is described sometimes as a vast and clean savanna, treeless and full of game, and at other times as a savanna with a huge town in which Kuma and her people live. This latter conception springs from the association the modern Yaruros have between wealth, comfort, power, and those material things which the civilized peoples possess. Towns are included among the products of the civilized. In the same way we find that although the Yaruros are a horseless people, Kuma and her people seem to have an abundance of horses. Apparently those things which are denied the Yaruros in this land are to be found in the next and shamanism is the means of expressing the longings of the living Yaruros.

THE LAND OF KIBEROH

In contrast with the beautiful world in which Kuma lives and to which all Yaruros expect to go, Kiberoh rules over a dark land inhabited by those unfortunate races of mankind left in the hole when the rope dropped by Hatchawa was broken by a too-heavy pregnant woman. Not much is known, nor is there much interest on the part of the Yaruros about this unpleasant region. However, this must not be taken that they have a belief in hell as Father Gumilla reported. According to this author the Yaruros believed in an evil spirit called Tighitighi. On the contrary, my informants identified Tighitighi merely as a large hawk which has no relation to the devil.

PUANÁ

Puaná stands out as the indulgent parent and teacher of Hatchawa. He is also the artisan who invented all of the implements now used by the Yaruros. He is conceived of as the great snake, and in fact is so portrayed on the gourd rattles of the shamans, yet there is a

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

776 [616] strong implication both in the myths and the saying he attends to his people, especially those belonging to the snake moiety, that Puaná is also anthropomorphic. I believe that the conception of the godheads is not quite as clear among the Yaruros as we who attempt to rationalize his beliefs would like it to be. Puaná stands closer to the members of his moiety than does even Kuma. During the shamanistic performances led by Landaeta the singing and dancing were rather sluggish until it was announced by the shaman that Puaná was on his way, and when Puaná reached the shaman's body there was unbounded rejoicing which put fresh spirit into the singing and the dancing. No such enthusiasm was apparent even when Kuma approached. We may contrast the attitude toward Kuma and Puaná as one of respect and one of familiar love.

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HATCHAWA

Hatchawa is the culture hero of the Yaruros. It is he who interceded with Kuma about giving fire to the human race, and it is he who begged Puaná to make a bow which he passed on to his people. He is credited with being the direct instrument and also the means by which the Yaruros have acquired knowledge of hunting. When Hatchawa arrives among the Yaruros during shamanistic performances he is received gladly and thankfully.

ITCIAI

All of the shamans with whom I spoke and whose performances I attended belong to the Puaná clan. They knew little of Itciai and were not interested in telling me much about this rival to Puaná. Itciai seems to be identified with the jaguar, but he is not anthropomorphic. He is given credit for having created the water in the rivers, but, as if they were jealous of even this attribute, my informants said that "Itciai created only the water in the rivers."

FLOOD LEGEND

773 539 After the people were created and had lived on this earth a long time they began to forget to do the right thing. They no longer believed that Kuma is the mother of water and the entire universe and everything that there is in it. So Kuma, in order to show them that she was the creator of the universe and everything therein, caused a rain to begin which continued until everything was covered over with water except a tree on the upper Capanaparo, and the top of a hill. A man and his sister took refuge on the very topmost branches of the tree, and a man with his aunt saved themselves by staying on top of this hill.

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

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789 that follow describe this land as well as the gods and the spirits of the Yaruros.

It is to be noted that it is the ornaments worn by Kuma rather than
• 776 the person of the gods which are described. We are told that she
301 wears golden necklaces, fine clothes, and belts and bands typical of the ancient Yaruro woman's costume. She is represented vaguely as being in the form of a human being, who, on the other hand, is never described. Try as I might, I was not able to obtain any idea of her appearance. Hatchawa, as we know, is a little boy, but Itciai again lacks any definite form.

787 The shaman claims that during his ordinary life he has no idea of what he sees in the Land of Kuma, therefore these descriptions can only be gathered from due sources through the songs which he sings in shamanistic performances and through the figures which he etches out on the shamanistic gourd rattle. Several of these rattles are reproduced on plate 24 and figures 25, 26, 27.

The shaman does not claim special power to reveal anything, nor does he claim to have the power to cure. He is merely a vehicle or instrument through which the gods can visit the Yaruros by substituting themselves for the soul of the shaman. The only power that he claims is the ability to let his soul leave his body and travel to the Land of
787 Kuma. His soulless body subsequently becomes possessed by various
533 spirits who wish to communicate with their relatives on earth. As explained above, the shaman only sings the first songs hesitantly and in a poor voice which is in direct contrast to the violent and beautiful singing which the spirits exhibit when they are in possession of his body.

772 Kuma's Land is a perfect heaven for the Yaruro, who has endowed it with all the comforts and liberty denied to him in this world. In Kuma's Land food is abundant, the weather is ideal, there are no forests, no diseases, and most important of all, no civilized being to desolate them. We are confronted here with the creation on the part of the Yaruro of a superlative heaven which furnishes an escape for him from the woes of this life.

181 We have noted before that primitive peoples, when faced for a
177 time with a hopeless situation in this world, such as extinction, tend to seek and discover an escape by creating such a heaven. The Guarani sought a heaven in the West where there was no death and no persecution. More recently our own Indians on the reservations have turned to Peyoteism, which also supplies a heaven. In all these cases there is a renunciation of this world. The will to live is practically gone because there is no need to worry about maintaining life in this world, an impossible thing to do when in competition with civilization. But a heaven which cannot be touched by any civilized

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

181 177 invention offers a perfect refuge, even though it is only a philosophical one.

Mechanical aids to the shaman, in addition to his own psychological make-up, are: music and dance; tobacco, which he consumes in great quantities during his performance; tcuipah, a root with narcotic properties; caroto, which is a fermented or unfermented mixture of crushed maize and water, or manioc and water, and when obtainable, white rum. The extent to which these stimulants are used can be illustrated by the observations which are made in the course of one all-night performance: The shaman consumed 42 cigarettes which I offered him, about 100 cigars, which consisted of several strips of tobacco leaf wrapped in a thick green leaf obtained from one of the trees along the bank, about 6 inches of the tcuipah root, and about 2 quarts of the fermented maize-and-water mixture. Since these narcotics and stimulants were taken hurriedlly and in great quantities, it must have had a terrific physiological effect upon him. For instance, every cigarette and cigar was smoked completely through in 10 seconds. Each musical stanza lasted from about 10 to 15 seconds. He sang it first and then it was repeated by his people. It was during this repetition of his song that the shaman inhaled as much of the tobacco smoke as possible and then exhaled it just before commencing a new stanza.

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In contrast with the rather violent shamanistic performance of the male shaman, the women do not seem to depend very much on narcotics. During the day the men are not permitted to sing or whistle, but the women may lie in their hammocks and sing. They may take small quantities of all of these narcotics, but as far as my observation went I never saw any of them consume any great quantity.

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The spiritual world of the shaman is quite different from the everyday realistic world. A comparison of the carvings on the gourd rattles with the realistic carvings of the asabache made by anyone greatly demonstrates this. In the latter form of art expression, animals, birds, and scenes are copied with great accuracy and skill. It is, therefore, reasonable to suppose that if the shaman were to attempt the realistic representation of the spirit world he could do so, but he has chosen to portray the various gods and spirits almost symbolically. Kuma and Hatchawa were always represented holding up their hands. It is this position which is read into the western skies whenever at sunset there occurs a phenomenon described above. The rays of light emanating from the horizon represent the fingers of the hands of the gods.

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The form of the dance has been described. It starts off as a simple walk around a pole and it may become a fast run in the evening,

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1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

535 791 with the stamping of the right foot on the off-beat, but whenever the shaman is giving a really good performance his whole body responds to the dance and he may shake as violently as the rattle in his hand. His people may also throw themselves into a dance, making a series of jerky movements, bending from the waist downward and up again.

533 539 One of the typical songs of Kuma was a greeting to me. She said:

> Greetings, man, greetings. Your wife is waiting. She is not dead, nor is she sick, but she is thinking that her husband has been away so long that perhaps he is dead. She is good and loves her husband who is sick, which is good. But it is good that he is with me (Kuma speaking) and with my people. He is a good man. He gives me a cigar. I shall give him a horse when he is born again in my (Kuma) land. I shall give him much silver when he is born again in Kuma Land. I love him, the good man, and I shall love him in my land. In the other land, my land, he gave me drink like you my people. Like you my people, everyone will come to my land, the Yaruro land.

FEMALE SHAMANISM

791 767 554 776 It proved impossible to learn much about those things in which the women are chiefly or exclusively interested. The shamans seem to be as influential among both sexes as the men are, and they seem to acquire their power and prestige through dreams or revelations in the same way as the male shamans do. In the case of the women it seems that India Rosa must appear in a dream rather than Kuma. In the legends it is India Rosa who taught the women the various arts and crafts, so in shamanism she is the chief spiritual power. During the day, both Kuma and India Rosa are pictured as resting in their hammocks. Because of that the women shamans sing sitting in their hammocks, swaying back and forth, during the day. Apparently it is believed that by imitating the picture of Kuma and India Rosa they can reach the two spiritual forces more easily. These shamans never perform at night, although they will sing with the male shaman when the latter is giving a performance.

535 791 554 The gourd rattle seems to be an instrument which only the shamans can use with immunity and as a means of conversing with Kuma. The women do not have these rattles. Their singing is done unaccompanied by any musical instrument or by any dancing. Dancing is performed only at night, when it is led by the male shaman.

609 123 The nature of the visions experienced by the female shamans remained unknown to me. As has been mentioned before, social intercourse between man and woman, unless closely related by blood or marriage, is prohibited. It is a social taboo which apparently is never violated and which no amount of bribery could break down. It seemed best to respect this custom, even though it were at the expense of remaining ignorant of many phases of Yaruro culture practiced by the women. So, in the case of shamanism, although the

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

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787 shaman eventually returned to us, being fed and greeted with affection by all.

The singing stopped at 6 o'clock. A number of rather remarkable facts are to be emphasized.

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796 1. By actual count the shaman sang no less than 3,000 musical phrases and verses and about 800 stanzas without any breaks or rest, ever changing the words, and subject matter, and jumping from one thing to another at a very fast tempo. How the shaman could make up his verses so quickly, while the people repeated the previous verse, is not easy to understand.

2. He shook the rattle without ceasing a moment, with the same sidewise motion of the hand, most violently for nine and a half hours.

[516] 3. He sat in the same posture—left leg doubled under him, right leg in cross-leg position, for the entire time. Not once did he move.

[276] 4. He smoked the long cigars with the thick leaves without taking them out of his mouth, producing so much smoke that I choked and my eyes smarted from it. He must have smoked at least 75 of them, and probably over a hundred. He smoked 35 cigarettes, in addition, in the same way.

[273] 5. He drank about 2 gallons of unfermented crushed maize in water.

The music was spirited and had a swing with the emphasis on the off beat that is as effective, if not more so, than the negro spiritual.

After the all-night singing there was a lull in the morning, everyone snatching a wink of sleep, but by the time I had finished writing and medicating my foot the men crowded around to tell me of the night's experiences. At noon the women started singing, sitting in their hammocks, and they kept this up until late in the day. They were singing mostly about me. I noticed that their songs seemed to be of a simpler sort and more monotonous than those of the men, generally consisting of one verse repeated over and over again to form the stanza. [198] They sang in the women's language.

JUAN BARIO ON THE EVENTS OF THE NIGHT

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776 Panemé Tsió brought a horse for the shaman to go to Kuma's house. Panemé Tsió is represented as a sort of "boss" of the figurines found in the sands. Then came the father of Fernando. He said that they should live well here and warned him not to mistreat his wife (talking to son-in-law). Then came the father of Brigida. He said that the new wife of his grandson should treat her husband well and vice versa. Then came a brother of Brigida. He said that he is wealthy in Kuma's land, possessing cattle and horses. Then came the mother of Brigida. She counseled her grandchild not to

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 S519 Yaruro S519

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mistreat his new wife, otherwise even his relatives in Kuma's land will lose their riches. She told Juan Bario, her brother, that she greeted him, that mother was happy (dead). Then came Garcia, the brother of Juan. He said that he had gone to the house of Kuma without having seen his relatives before dying (he died without being attended during his illness); that he was buried without even clothing, and thus he arrived at Kuma's without anything (his clothing was actually stolen); that the grandfather (father of Juan Bario) came to take him to Kuma's land since his uncle was far away and busy and did not know of the sickness (father rarely is mentioned as taking care of children).

Then came Itciai on horseback, shoes, hat, etc. He came to greet us, and said that he came to greet me also since I was also a Pumeh; he told Juan Bario to interpret what he was saying to me, since I didn't understand Yaruro very well; he loved me and my family very much; that he loved a man who visited his people with love in his heart like me; that when the world ends he will not be like the others but like you will be made rich in Kuma's land; to explain to me, since I lived near him, that his wife, son, and family are well and waiting for me; that he had made the world to live in as this man lived; that I was a very good man and knew very much, that is why I was waiting with a cigar for him; that Hatchawa was coming.

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Hatchawa came on horseback, with bow and arrow, shoes, and gold necklace. He said: "I have come to greet this man and all of you. What do you say and think of this man? Isn't it true that he loves you? The man came with love for you. There are no people like him about here. He is like you of the same family. Puaná will come now."

Puaná came on horseback, which makes a noise like the anaconda, "teio, teio"! "I have come to greet the man and you. Didn't you in his land? He has come with love for you. He is of your family; take care of him. Raise him as one of your family. He knows a great deal, like the shaman. That is the reason that he sings as you do. I have watched from very near. He lives in a land just like mine, mountainous and very beautiful. Where he lives it isn't warm as here. Sometimes it is very cold. Ask him if he wants a drink. Kuma is coming to get you."

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Kuma arrived and said:

"How are you? The man has come here as I want it to be. He is of our family, not like the people about here. That is the reason he loves you so much. He knows as much as the shaman; that is why he is waiting with a cigar ready. That is as I like people to be. Tell him that when the earth ends he won't live here in a cold world like the (?) but will live with you and like you very rich. He is of our family. Where he lives is very beautiful. For this reason I made this earth that people like him should live on it. For this reason I told Puaná to come to greet him, for I love him very much."

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

in small pieces on the banks of the Capanaparo. It is about as hard to work as coal. It has much the same appearance. The carving tool is the ordinary knife which, in some cases, may be a broken machete. Yet, with such crude implements, they are able to produce exquisite realistic carvings of birds, fish, and other animals. These are generally perforated and strung into a necklace. Each woman possesses at least a few of these carved figures, the number depending on the industry of her husband. No symbolical significance seems to be attached to either the painting, the carving, or to any of the designs appearing on the stamps. There may be some magical meaning to them, but all inquiries were answered in the negative.

The gourd rattles present an entirely different manifestation. In the first place, only the male shaman can use a rattle. It is, in fact, the badge of shamanism. All the designs appearing on the rattle represent what he sees during his visits to Kuma's land. These carvings are made with the point of any sharp instrument, which cuts in just deep enough to expose the lighter colored inner wood of the rattle.

To become a shaman one must dream of Kuma and the other gods, and show his people that he can communicate with the godheads when occasion demands. Perhaps looking at shamanistic practices objectively this may mean primarily that the would-be shaman has a fertile imagination and some artistic talent. I do not think that we ought to doubt that he believes that he actually sees and talks with Kuma, Itciai, and the rest of the spirit world.

He commemorates his dreams on the sacred rattle, carving out on its surface the figures which appear in his dreams. Kuma and Hatchawa dominate the decorations on the gourd rattles, and since those collected came from the Puaná moiety, Puaná is also portrayed. In plate 24 various views of one of these gourd rattles are shown. The large geometric figure dominating the first drawing represents Kuma; the smaller one Hatchawa. Rotating the rattle toward the left we discover Puaná, the Snake.

In connection with these rattles one of the most interesting aesthetic features is the filling in of space. All of the specimens collected and shown in figures 25, 26, and 27 demonstrate this. In watching Landaeta at work I asked him why he did so; his reply was that a properly decorated rattle must be "tsaimui", that is "good", "proper", "beautiful."

Music

One would suspect that the Yaruros would have borrowed some of the musical instruments employed by the Llaneros. Among the lat-

1[See category 116, end p[ar]k 14 --- Analyst]
2[See category 116, pp. 242-243 --- Analyst]

4: Leeds E-5 (1958) 1960 SS19 Yaruro SS19

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village to village, since each village constitutes a separate and independent center of relationships with neighboring villages and consequently has its own unique assortment of outside relationships, based partly on choice. This situation, like so many other aspects of the socio-economic organization is reflected in the cosmology.

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According to the Yaruro, the cosmos originally lacked not only humans, but even gods. There existed only three concentric, rigid, blue, celestial domes; below them, a flat, undifferentiated, vast savana all of sand; and a cold, dark, flat underworld. Beyond these there was, and is, nothing. Thunder, already then, was to be found between the upper celestial domes, while Sun, his wife, Moon, and their children, the stars, were already revolving between the lower two.

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Into this cosmos were spontaneously born the primordial gods. The goddess Ku'ma^{n}, the grandmother of us all, who lives in a land to the west, out of the savana created the discrete lands of her fellow gods and of the Yaruro. She created the non-Yaruro peoples, the *nivé*, first, and the Yaruro, the *pumé*, last, which is why there are so few - there were few left to create. She ordered Kiberó, the female toad who lives in the dark underworld to give fire, which she belched from her belly. Ku'ma^{n} created the foods wich are collected and the modes of preparing them. She instructed the men and the women in their crafts. She ordained the social order. Her husband, Poa'na^{n}, the snake god, who lives in a land to the south, created the characteristic savana features: the rivers, the woods, the grasses for the animals to eat.

He taught men the technology of horticulture and gave them the seeds of the garden crops. He, with his fellow god, Icial, who lives in a land to the north and was born a boy given to troublemaking though he later matured, then taught the arts of hunting and fishing. Poa'na^{n} son, Hachawa, who lives in a land to the east, created only the ceremonial cigarettes. The four godly other-worlds lie beyond the Great Water which surrounds, but is not quite contiguous to, the Yaruro hither world. This geographical break in the cosmos is negligible, however, since the hither-world and the other-worlds become continuous in the thought and action of the Yaruro. The Great Water continues in an endless expanse beyond the four other-worlds, according to one interpretation, while in another, it is said to be enclosed by limitless, unpeopled and empty savanas. The four Yaruro other-worlds are also inhabited by a younger generation of gods all possessing Spanish names. Some interpreters identify these with the primordial gods. Others do not. According to some informants, they live in the same lands as the older gods. Others say they live in different lands. Such variations of religious interpretation occur frequently despite general agreement in all essentials. Individual freedom of choice and interpretation, already noted in connection with economic choice and social interrelationships, is also found in relation to ideology.

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The godly other-worlds are generally described as idealized versions of the Yaruro hab'tat. This is true also of a fifth otherworld, one which is discontinuous geographically, conceptually, and behaviorally with the rest of the Yaruro worlds, though similar in form. This is the land of Dios, the God of

4: Leeds E-5 (1958) 1960 SS19 Yaruro SS19

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Christian Venezuelans, which lies between the two lower celestial domes and existed prior to Ku'maⁿ.

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It is to be noted that Ku'maⁿ was not responsible for creating her fellow primordial gods. She is not an omnipotent creator but is fundamentally limited to creating other-world and hither-world things familiar to the Yaruro. She exists in an independent but loosely coordinate status with other celestial beings or phenomena like Thunder, Sun, Moon, the stars, the rainbow, and possibly Dios — the prototype for personal status among the Yaruro. Furthermore, despite wide variation in creation myths, the fact stands out, too, that she must almost equal honors with Poa'naⁿ in the creation of all that is vital to the Yaruro in the hither-world in a creational division of labor closely paralleling the division of labor found in the actual economy. Further, Ku'maⁿ and Poa'naⁿ, by the link of marriage, provide a prototype for the essential productive and distributional unit, the household. Hachawa, their son according to some informants, and Icial, Poa'naⁿ sister's son, both boys at the time of the creation, contribute little and are as much nuisance as help until they have matured, an apt reflection of the position of children in Yaruro economy. Today Poa'naⁿ and Ku'maⁿ seem preeminent in status among the gods, but at the same time are definitely merely *primi inter pares*, occupying the position of more experienced elders within the community of the gods, each of whom acts autonomously according to his own dictates.

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The community of the gods is again prototypic for Yaruro hither-world life. Each god and his land constitutes a sort of village community populated by the god or gods, by dead *pumé*, by dead animals, and by the regular other-worldly animal population especially jaguars in human form and dress. The human-like inhabitants of the other-world eat, drink, dance, have sex relations, and visit from god's land to god's land. They enter into the web of kinship which ties the gods to each other, to the dead Yaruro, and to the live *pumé* of the hither-world in complex, if varying, genealogical connections. Even the great jaguar god, T:ó whose bailiwick is the first celestial dome and whose main task, under the general direction of Ku'maⁿ, is to cure, is considered distantly related and of the family of Poa'naⁿ. A number of animal species are similarly distantly related, but like those Yaruro who cannot be fitted into the kinship system, are merely connected to us nominally. The gods, the dead, and the live *pumé* equally observe kinship obligations. Thus kinship and visits among the autonomous lands of the gods are the chief ties holding the four other-worlds together, a prototype for Yaruro village and social structure. (3)

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However, in relationship to the living, Ku'maⁿ is 'our chief'. More than any other god, she is turned to for advice, for ethical reaffirmations, and for fulfillment of needs. It is first to Ku'maⁿ bright and golden land that the *pumé* go at death, during unconsciousness, in dreams, and during the religious ceremonies, the *tonghés*. The other lands are visited later and are less important in the other-worldly journeys made by the living. The dead of Ku'maⁿ land are the first to be called upon by the shaman when, during the *tonghés*, he arrives in the other-worlds. He asks them, as well as Ku'maⁿ and the other gods, to

(3) Eliade (1954) emphasizes this prototypic quality of "primitive" ideologies throughout the book.

4: Leeds E-5 (1958) 1960 SS19 Yaruro SS19

776 775 return to earth and guide the community. In this manner, Ku'maⁿ is a center of gravity of the Yaruro ideological life. She is the center of a communications network which ties the Yaruro of the hither-world, those of the other-worlds, and the gods all in one continuous system of personal and social relations. This is somewhat the position of the spokesman or 'capitan' in the community [622] life of the Yaruro, though he has proportionally much less influence in his village than Ku'maⁿ has in her universe.

775 776 772 In sum, the gods and the dead are conceptualized as continuous with those of us on earth. Conceptually they appear to constitute the two highest steps in the age levels: infant, child, young adult, elder, the dead, and the gods. The last four classes are increasingly instrumental in teaching the ethics of living in tranqu'lity, of respect and deference to one's spouse and to all members of one's people, and in teaching the values of the community. They exhort but never compel the community to follow these ideals. These precepts are followed not only among the egalitarian gods in their autonomous other-world communities, but in the personal and social relations between the gods and the hither-world *pumé*. The relations between men and gods, the communication between the hither-and other-worlds, the cosmography itself, all show quite clearly that [771] there is no separation of "natural" and "supernatural" as discrete classes of events. The cosmos, society, and man are a single system in Yaruro thought.

796 771 The nexus through which the flow of life in the other-world and the ongoing rhythm of daily life in the hither-world are meshed into a single system is the religious ceremony, the *tonghé*. Some description of the *tonghé* will afford us further insight into Yaruro ideology.

796 756 787 During the night-long *tonghés*, the entire community sits behind the shaman, ranged roughly by age levels. The women sit to his right, the men to his left. At dusk he begins to sing as he starts his journey to the land of Ku'maⁿ through the dark, cold land of Kiberó, the toad who gave man fire. In hundreds of improvised verses and melodies, he describes his journey, and then, after his arrival about midnight, his adventures in the lands of Ku'maⁿ and subsequently of the other gods. In each verse, the shaman sings an intonation which the entire community repeats in an identical antiphon. Thus the full experience of the shaman is transmitted to and shared by every member of the community. All is public; there is no secret knowledge. The shaman urges his people to sing with him and the other-worldly beings, to share in the responsibilities and joys of the community in supporting their individual members whether the [757] shaman in his journey or the sick person for whom the *tonghé* may be being held. At the same time, in Ku'maⁿ land, he urges the other-worldly beings to come to advise his people and teach them. Later, the verses are no longer sung by the shaman, but rather by the dead and the gods who arrive in the husk of the shaman which he has left behind as a channel of communications for the [776] other-worldly beings while his divisible self travels abroad. As these beings arrive in the shaman's husk, all members of the community may greet them by putting their arms around them or giving them cigarettes or drink. This is done separately by women, sometimes in groups, and by men. Throughout the ceremony the chief link between the sexually divided community is the shaman or the gods in the shaman's husk upon whom both sexes are focusing

4: Leeds E-5 (1958) 1960 SS19 Yaruro SS19

the community may do the shaman's work if he chooses, just as any can travel to the other-world or commune with the gods, although, because of age, temperament, or individual taste, not every one does so. There were, in fact, two shamans among the nine men of the writer's village, as well as a number of men who cured and who occasionally sang verse intonations in the *tonghés* although they were not shamans. The shamans are no more than respected community members outside the ceremony. Here again we observe the egalitarianism and individual self-determinism which is so much a pattern of this culture.

The *tonghé* also clearly shows the relationships which prevail between men and gods. The shamans and the other adults of the village converse with the gods in great mutual respect. They do not manipulate them nor minister to them, nor implore them. Before the gods, they are in a position corresponding to active and adept junior members of the village before their elders and especially their lineal ascendants. Furthermore, in a very real sense, no individual person, *qua* person, deals with the gods. The community, with its religious catalyst, the shaman, is the unit of action. The only individual relations with the gods occur in dreams, unconsciousness, and death. Dreams about gods are made public by singing aloud in sleep, the experience of unconsciousness is recounted publicly, and death, too, becomes public because the dead man is accessible through the *tonghés*.

The directness of contact between man and gods again emphasizes the unity of cosmos, society, and man. Within this unity, the sharp division of a male sphere from a female sphere is found. These quite coordinate spheres, in the other-worlds as in the hither-world, in religion as in socio-economic life, are linked through the household.

In conclusion, I would like briefly to review the major dimensions of Yaruro ideology. We may state these as a set of propositions, each presenting a major dimension of the ideology.

1. Cosmic structure. ***The cosmos is static, limited, concrete, and internally continuous in that no barriers separate man and his society in the physical world from the nonphysical world.*** The parts of the universe together form a rather rigid, symmetrical, architectonic structure, although each individual Yaruro may vary the description of the whole to suit his particular taste. All parts are of roughly coordinate importance. The major motions of nature, such as thunder and lightning, the revolutions of sun and moon, are often embodied, personalized, and independently operating entities, moved by semi-human motivations.

2. The good. ***Goodness inheres generally in the cosmos as a system. The goodness manifests itself in understood causes and concretely and describably known parts of the cosmos which, whether places, persons, or things, are given exact locations.*** Conversely all known and localizable objects, persons, or places and understood causes are generally good.

3. The not-good. ***Evil, which is not polar to good, finds its locus in specific persons, things, or events inside or outside the cosmos, and is manifest in specific results. The underlying causes of evil, however, are inac-***

Y 186 10 /10 cont./ These are in fact presented as enemies or inferiors. The Otomaco, on the contrary, appear to have been friends or relatives who were superior to them. This hierarchy is apparently confirmed by the Yaruro myth of the creation of men (12) where

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12. See "infra" IV List...38.

the Otomaco were the first brought out of a hole in the ground by the masculine divinity Iţiai, the Yaruro arriving only in second place, followed by the other Indians and the Racionales who were the last born. Their birth took place, in addition, just after that of Iţiai but before the flood which submerged the world and only after which the Yaruro were born.

O Y 773 776 The Otomaco seem to have the same divinities and religious manifestations as the Yaruro, as comes out from the words of our informant, Pedro Ramón Camacho, reproduced word for word below.

"They knew who the Kuma (13) was and they were loved by

13. Female Yaruro divinity.

O 776 the Gods. Now in the other world whereas the dead of the other Indians inhabit an isolated village located at the edge of the Universe, on the shore of the sea and some leagues from the Kuma's village, the Otomaco live a little lower than the Kuma's village, like from here to the corridor of forest (some 200 meters), in a village perched on the /11/ mountain. They called the Kuma, Iţiai, and Puana (14) by their names.

14. Another masculine Yaruro divinity, Iţiai's brother.

O Y 775 776 They had, like us, tiyo (protecting spirits represented by stones or pottery remains) and when my spirit walks along the

/11 cont./

O Y 775 776 way which leads to the other world it will meet after the village of the tiyo of Iţiai, at the left, on the same side, the tiyo of the Otomaco. They sang and danced (shamanistic ceremony) during the day when Kuma and Iţiai were still living on earth. When they ran off into the other world they continued to sing and dance but at night. During their songs they walked, the old men of past times used to say."

Y 533 539 Pedro Ramón Camacho completed his account with a quatrain of this song which had been repeated to him by a grandfather, but the meaning of which he did not know:

gwačarka hihi gwačarka hihi
gwačarka hihi gwačarka hihi
pideruba pideruba pideruba hihi
pideruba pideruba pideruba hihi

Y 773 825 136 The Otomaco are presented in Yaruro legends as being in the beginning three animals: the mono (15), the araguato (16),

15. Monkey (Cebus nigrivittatus), in Venezuelan.

16. Howling monkey (Alouetta ursina), in Venezuelan.

and the chigüíre (17).

17. Capybara, large amphibious rodent (Hydrochoerus hydrochoeris), in Venezuelan.

Y 773 825 The transformation of the Otomaco into monos and araguatos seems to have occurred at the time of the flood unleashed by Iţiai to cleanse the world of all the moral disorder which reigned there. Some Otomaco took refuge in the trees